

IN THE DRAWINGS:

The Examiner objected to the drawings because Figure 1 was not designated as prior art. As such, Applicant has amended Figure 1 to include a prior art legend. Applicant submits amended Figure 1 with the corrections illustrated in red for the Examiner's approval.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1 and 14, add Claims 17-22 and amend Claims 2, 5-13 and 15. A marked up version of the Claims is in the attached Appendix.

A | 17. (New) A method for joining together two or more superimposed generally planar sheets using a fastener having a shank and a fastener setting and sheet deforming assembly comprising a die with a cavity and an annular recess defined around said cavity, comprising the steps of:

Sub B27 placing the superimposed planar sheets in the fastener setting and sheet deforming assembly; and

operating the assembly to set the fastener into engagement with the sheets such that the shank of the fastener is upset in said die cavity without penetration of the lowermost sheet, and to deform all the sheets out of their planes into the annular recess.

18. (New) A method according to claim 3 wherein the sheets are deformed by a head portion of the fastener.

19. (New) A method according to claim 4 wherein the sheets are deformed by a head portion of the fastener.

20. (New) A method according to claim 5 wherein the sheets are deformed by a head portion of the fastener.

21. (New) A method according to claim 6 wherein the sheets are deformed by a head portion of the fastener.

A1
Sub B3
22. (New) An apparatus for joining together two or more superimposed generally planar sheets with a fastener having a shank, the apparatus comprising a fastener setting and sheet deforming assembly comprising a die, a cavity in said die and an annular recess defined around said cavity, the apparatus being operative to receive the sheets, to set said fasteners into engagement with the sheets such that the shank of the fastener is upset in said die cavity without penetration of at least the lowermost sheet and to deform all the sheets out of their plane into the annular recess.

Concluded

A2
2. (Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the sheets are deformed before the fastener is set.

5. (Amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein the sheets are unclamped before the fastener is set.

A3
6. (Amended) A method according to claim 3, 4 or 5 wherein the sheets are clamped together between a clamping member and the die, the sheets being deformed between the clamping member and the die.

7. (Amended) A method according to claim 2 wherein the sheets are deformed by a head portion of the fastener.

8. (Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the sheets are deformed after the fastener is set.

9. (Amended) A method according to claim 8, wherein the sheets to be deformed are clamped between a clamping member and the die, the sheets being deformed between the clamping member and the die.

10. (Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein the sheets are deformed and the fastener is set simultaneously.

11. (Amended) A method according to claim 10, wherein the sheets are deformed by a head portion of the fastener driving the sheets into the recess when the fastener is set.

A3 12. (Amended) A method according to claim 11, wherein the sheets are clamped against a surface of the die outside the recess during the setting of the fastener.

13. (Amended) A method according to claim 11 or 12, wherein the fastener head has a periphery, the fastener head increases in thickness toward the periphery so as to define a convex surface facing the recess formed in the die.

Concluded

AK
SUB 15. (Amended) A rivet for use in accordance with the method of claim 17, comprising a head the thickness of which increases continually in the radially outwards direction to define a convex surface beneath the head.